



Frequently Asked Questions about **Plain Talk Program Teams**

Q: Why do we have Program Plain Talk Teams?

A: The Plain Talk effort at Ecology has been voluntary until now. The Plain Talk Executive Order (EO) makes writing clear documents mandatory. This makes the scope of work too great for the existing Plain Talk Team.

Now, each program is responsible for implementing the Plain Talk Executive Order (EO) in their program. Your program management has identified a team to lead this effort. (That's you!)

Q: What will Program Plain Talk Teams do?

A: Each team will establish the process their program will use to apply Plain Talk Principles to documents (both new and on your prioritized list). Team members will lead, coordinate and/or conduct the necessary activities to comply with the EO. You will also have to track your program's progress. (We will provide more information on tracking soon.)

Q: How will I find the time to do this?

A: Remember this is a team effort. Not everyone on your team will work on documents at the same time. In addition, document authors, content experts, and support staff will help share the load. Management should be providing time for everyone on the team.

Experience from current team members shows that, over time, you get better at applying the principles and find ways to save time. As you work with staff in your program they will start to apply the principles themselves. This will save you time in reviewing their documents.

Q: What authority does the team have to apply Plain Talk to documents?

A: The Governor requires each agency to write documents using the Plain Talk Principles. Ecology will implement the EO at the program level. Your program management delegated the responsibility and authority to implement the EO to your team.

Q: Who can the Teams go to for assistance?

A: Laurie Dumar and Bari Schreiner are coordinating implementation of the Governor's Plain Talk Executive Order. They also coordinate the agency Plain Talk Team. They are available to answer questions and assist your team in implementing Plain Talk in your program.

Q: What if we uncover a confusing policy or procedure?

A: Sometimes when you rewrite a document you will uncover a confusing policy or procedure. For example, one person at the table may think a deadline is *two-weeks from the day the customer receives the letter* and another person may think it is *two-weeks from the day Ecology mails the letter*. Try to resolve this with the group you are working with. If you can't, bring it to the attention of your management.

Q: How long do we have to get through our prioritized list?

A: The prioritized list is meant to be a one year workload projection. There is no penalty for not getting through your entire list. You just need to show you are making progress.

Q: What if we apply Plain Talk to a document not on our list?

A: The EO applies to all new and existing documents, so any Plain Talk work you do counts! If you apply Plain Talk to a document not on your list, include it in your program's quarterly reports.

Q: Does the Attorney General's Office (AGO) support Plain Talk?

A: Yes, they support Plain Talk. When you need AGO advice, include them early on in the process so they can offer their advice while you are working on the document rather than when it is done.

Q: What role do the translation teams have in Plain Talk?

A: The translation teams ask you to involve them early in the process. This will help them when they translate the document because they will have a better understanding of why it was written a particular way.